

But the very significant remarks made by Miss de Pledge have also been absolutely suppressed in the *Nurses' Journal*. Not that that lady can complain of this method, as the "suppress system" was inaugurated during her period of editorship, and it is inevitable that the "whirligig of time" should bring round its own revenges.

MISS DE PLEDGE is reported in the *Hospital's* account of the proceedings to have taken the following action which, we have no hesitation in saying, places the member of the medical profession, alluded to, in the most undignified position. "With regard to the proposal for life-members to repay their subscriptions, Miss de Pledge, on behalf of several friends, said, that she and they were willing to do so, but that before any steps were taken in the matter, they would like Dr. Bezly Thorne's service to the Association recognised in a substantial manner. The Chairman said that this suggestion should be brought forward, and considered in due time."

Now it is an open secret that several medical men, far below the third rank in their own profession, have "boomed" their connection with the Nurses' Association for all it is worth; they have thus come into personal relations with a member of the Royal Family, and it is a common professional joke that "*they have taken very good care that their patients should know it.*" In plain English they have used the Nurses' Royal Association for unvarnished purposes of self-advertisement, and in the opinion of many of the leaders in their own profession, "it is time this nursing boom was exploded."

THAT Dr. Bezly Thorne should permit the Matron of the Chelsea Workhouse Infirmary to haggle over "his services" to the Nurses' Association, and bargain for "substantial recognition" to him, before she and her friends contribute to its depleted exchequer, is a most unprofessional proceeding, and it is so considered by medical men as well as by nurses. This is by no means the first time that Miss de Pledge has made Dr. Bezly Thorne appear ridiculous by her advocacy.

THE status of the nurse members present at the General Council Meeting is interesting. Eighteen nurse members were present: *Three* Matrons of General Hospitals; *one* Matron of a Poor Law Infirmary; *one* Matron of an Imbecile Asylum; *SIX* proprietors of Nursing Homes (commercially dependent on medical men); *five* hospital sisters; *one* nurse; and *one* secretary of a Nurses' Club; and out of the thirty-two persons present, not less than *eight* were connected with the Middlesex Hospital. Ichabod! Verily, the glory has departed.

### **The Care and Nursing of the Epileptic.**

At the Annual Conference of the National Union of Women Workers, held at Norwich, a paper on the above subject was read by Miss Gibson, Matron of the Birmingham Workhouse Infirmary. Miss Gibson said that the epileptic had special and unusual claims on the public. When born in a cottage it suffered every disadvantage in infancy, as it could not get the attendance it needed. In its babyhood it was left to the care of strangers, or to its own devices. When it became of school age it was refused admission to all elementary schools, though the ruling which prohibited the attendance of epileptics was now under consideration by the Department, and she trusted it might soon lead to legislation. So, as no place could be found for him, the epileptic drifted into a workhouse, and there lost all individuality and became an imbecile. In a higher rank of life the case of a child was hardly less sad, and as the years rolled by he was shut out from all competition with his fellow man. She believed it was almost impossible to realise the nervous irritability which accompanied the disease, the feeling that nothing mattered, that life could never be more than an existence, and who could blame the sufferer for giving up the effort, and simply yielding to the inevitable without further struggle. She knew of cases in which, since the passing of the Workmen's Compensation Act of 1898, epileptic employees had been discharged by their employers, who would not take the responsibility of giving them employment and running the risk of an accident, of which the employee could not accept the consequences. She had dwelt at length on the dark side of the epileptic's life, because do what we would we could not alter the decree of nature, but only make the best of it. In her opinion, that best seemed to be attained by the colony system. In England that system had been very tardily and sparsely adopted, and yet the results attained by its adoption have been comparatively very great. So far as she knew there were only three—one near Liverpool, at Maghull, with 119 patients; one at Chalfont St. Peters; and the other, Lady Meath's Home for Women in Surrey. She believed that she was right in saying that for the thousands of epileptics who, in England, might, nay, almost certainly would, be benefitted by the colony treatment, provision has only been made for between 200 and 300. Germany had gone far before us. To her mind the advantages offered by the life of a well-ordered colony were greatly in excess of those which could be given in the most luxurious home. In these colonies there existed among the patients, who were taught to help each other, a spirit of helpful independence, for each had a duty to perform, and thus each gained self-respect. Even in the case of the richest, where every luxury was possible, the colony treatment was to be desired, because it

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